Platform Shift in Education: Filipino Undergraduate Students’ Attitude towards Speaking English in the Virtual Classroom

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Abstract: The pandemic that halted academic institutions had already initiated a shift to various online learning modalities. With the use of technology and the appropriate applications, virtual classrooms were utilized instead of traditional face-to-face classes. A number of research studies on the shift have also been conducted, yet there is a gap in the speaking English attitude inside virtual classes. Furthermore, students' attitude toward English language learning influence their motivation to become competent, and it is thus stated that the impact on language acquisition is regulated by the students' attitude. Thus, the current study's main goal is to determine Filipino undergraduate students' attitudes toward speaking English in the virtual classroom. The English-Speaking Attitude Questionnaire (ESAQ) of Bui and Intaraprasert (2013) was adapted in this study since it is related to the context of this research. The items in the ESAQ focus on the respondents' attitudes regarding speaking English in the virtual classroom, their motivations for using the language, why it is essential to them, and their perceived English-speaking skills. The data that was collected was from pre-service teachers who are currently having their classes virtually. Moreover, it also explored significant differences in respondents' attitudes towards speaking English across gender and specialization. Results show the overall attitude of the respondents toward speaking English in the virtual classroom was "somewhat positive." On the other hand, there is no significant difference when respondents are grouped according to gender. Finally, specialization was found to have a significant difference in attitude in speaking classes in the virtual classroom. Therefore, despite the paradigm shift in education caused by the pandemic, students' attitudes toward speaking English did not change.

Keywords: virtual classroom, speaking English, attitude, gender.

Introduction

Background of the Study

The COVID-19 virus, which began in the city of Wuhan in China, became a pandemic in the year 2020 (Remuzzi, 2020). Furthermore, the increasing number of COVID-19 cases had an impact on education systems, prompting schools to close in both developed and developing countries, thereby halting academic institutions for the time being (UNESCO, 2020). Boivin and Welby (2021) stated that millions of students witnessed a major transition in teaching methodologies and educational delivery. However, when schools and universities were forced to collapse, the campaign to switch to online learning became the most vital and critical option available (Martinez, 2020).

In accordance with the notions above, the paradigm shift was the immediate response in the educational sector (Wang & Gao, 2021). Due to technology improvements and its significance as a tool for online education, it became necessary for instructors to adapt to these demands while also creating a vital experience (Murphy, 2020) while conducting online classes in the midst of the pandemic. Nonetheless, according to Domingue et al. (2020), it is crucial for the learners’
competence in English and communication skills to impact their attitude towards speaking English with the unexpected shift. Indeed, attitude greatly influences the learner’s proficiency in communicating using the English language (Toonman & Intraprasert, 2015). This shows that attitude has a significant impact on a learner's capacity to speak fluently in English, as attitude undermines the student's efforts and sacrifices to learn to speak the language.

In reference to the remarks mentioned above, in view of speaking English within the classroom, it is critical for English learners to acquire the English language, especially when expressing thoughts and using the language, because it is widely used around the world (Akkakosan, 2016). Hence, it requires a wide range of skills, including grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and the topic of the speaker's speech (Abbaspour, 2016). These skills enable students to be attentive and involved in English-speaking classes. When they have mastered these competencies, they will be able to communicate effectively and perform well in school (Dagtan & Cabaroglu, 2021).

If students are proficient in their speaking skills, the teaching and learning in the classroom will advance and develop. When students actively participate in class, it ensures solid learning practice and experience, which only implies that their proficiency in speaking English has improved (Jacobs & Hayirsever, 2016). When students excel at speaking English, it ensures that their other macro skills will have the opportunity to progress and develop. As a result, it is critical to strengthen one's speaking skills because they influence the development of other skills (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

Being able to communicate in English allows students to broaden their horizons while also ensuring their chances in academic and extracurricular settings (Brown, 2001; Cook, 2003; Crystal, 2003). Although speaking English is critical in foreign language studies, there have been reported issues with using it in the classroom, which sometimes cause students to feel anxious while doing their best to be a good speaker (Katamba, 2013). However, with the help of newly created technologies that are suited for use in a classroom setting, these digital resources assist students in attending online speaking classes (Brown, 2010; Yilmaz et al., 2016).

It was highlighted that English-speaking sessions conducted online may encounter technological difficulties (Austin et al., 2017). Students have issues that interfere with their learning process, which impacts their attitude depending on the context (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Chou, 2018). This suggests that there are underlying difficulties with online English-speaking lessons and that how students address these influences their attitude to the English language. Thus, it is evident that students' attitudes towards the learning process in the context of a classroom environment impact their behavior and performance (Abidin, 2012). Meanwhile, Gardner (1985) demonstrated that learners' attitudes towards English language learning impact their drive to become competent and then argued that the impact on language acquisition is controlled by the students' attitude. Victori and Lockhart (1995), however, assumed in their study that students who have a favorable attitude toward speaking English will be more inclined to engage in the learning environment, whereas those who have a negative attitude will behave exactly the opposite.

A number of scholars have investigated how the transition from traditional classrooms to online teaching will entail immediate changes for both professors and students (Jabbari et al., 2015; Kusumawati, 2020). A virtual classroom driven by technology offers a new dimension to remote learning and teaching techniques. In addition, contemporary changes in the educational paradigm result in a shift in the attitude of students enrolled in listening and speaking courses (Kaisar & Chowdhury, 2018; Noor et al., 2020). It is therefore now time to revisit the pressing need to investigate the factors responding to variations in student attitudes and their relationship to the platform shift in education.

Learners can broaden their background in terms of communication abilities by utilizing technology and other digital platforms (Jabbari et al., 2015). According to Toonman and Intraprasert (2015), students who have a good attitude towards the usage of the English language while speaking are more likely to adopt communication strategies, whereas those who have a
negative attitude act otherwise. Nonetheless, these concerns existed before the pandemic. As a corollary, it is vital to identify the shift in student attitudes towards speaking English on both virtual and traditional platforms in order to see the shift in attitude before and after the pandemic.

Hence, the aim of the study is to examine the underlying attitudes of Filipino undergraduate students who speak English in virtual classrooms. Furthermore, determining if the abrupt transition from traditional educational platforms to online learning promotes or hinders their mastery of the English language when utilized orally is crucial.

Research Questions:
In view of the foregoing context and purpose, the present study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the attitude of the pre-service teachers towards speaking English in the virtual classroom?
2. Do males and females significantly differ in their attitude towards speaking English in the virtual classroom?
3. Is there a significant difference in the attitude of pre-service teachers towards speaking English in the virtual classroom across specializations?

Review of Related Literature

Attitude towards Speaking English
It is essential for English learners to master the language, especially when expressing themselves and utilizing it. There are speaking techniques in the language, and they are usually visible depending on the setting, making the learners feel aware and influencing their spoken usage of the English language (Zhang, 2009). Students who are fluent in English can develop their speaking abilities and advance their understanding of language patterns and other communicative methods, as claimed by Becker and Ross (2016). In some ways, it is both imitative and reproductive. However, the ability to communicate in English allows students to broaden their horizons while also ensuring their chances in academic and extracurricular settings (Brown, 2001; Cook, 2003; Crystal, 2003).

Burnkart (1998) suggests that speaking requires a wide range of skills, including grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and the topic of the speaker's speech. These skills enable students to be attentive and involved in English-speaking classes. When they have mastered these competencies, they will be able to communicate effectively and perform well in school. Moreover, the ability to speak English extends beyond the concept of grammatical rules and stylistics. As a result, a general understanding of the significance of speaking English is formed. Regardless of the larger picture, looking at the narrower concept, proper language use assists learners in becoming competent orally (Saunders et al., 2006).

Having a broad vocabulary is an essential requirement for successful speaking. If the speaker possesses an extensive vocabulary, this will support the foundation of his speech. Thus, it allows him to structurally organize his ideas and understand the various communicative functions of language (Hiebert & Kamil, 2005). Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2020) also mentioned that there were numerous ways to convey a message, and speaking requires slightly different characteristics than writing. Therefore, speakers must communicate in spoken language. The characteristics are the speaker's use of his voice, his facial expression, and the prosodic features of his speech (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020).

Relatively few studies have been carried out and investigated language and its relationship to achievement and behavior (House & Prion, 1998; Nal, Evin, & Saracolu, 2009; Saracolu & Varol, 2007; Serin, Serin, & Ceylan, 2010). In line with this, the following authors have said that, in the findings of their studies, these relationships are related to a positive attitude toward
speaking skills being influenced by language competence and conduct toward them (Bui & Intaraprasert, 2013; Marzban & Sadighi, 2013). Moreover, it was also anchored to the series of studies (Huang & Van Naerssen, 1987; Lam, 2010; Margolis, 2001; Nakatani, 2006; Wannaruk, 2003; Weerarak, 2003) that say being proficient in oral communication is one component of communication methods. These findings were consistent with the hypothesis that this impacts English speaking skills, implying that people with a broad vocabulary and mastery of the English language are likely to be more interested in oral communication (Chen, 2009; Huang & Van Naerssen, 1987). Despite these thorough assessments, the researcher found limited studies about the students' language and speaking attitudes in the context of communication done in virtual classrooms, which this research will explore.

Researchers claimed that gender, on the other hand, was claimed to be a significant aspect when it comes to learning the English language; it was reported that females are more interested and have positive performances in English language speaking classes than males (Keller, 1983; Aacken, 1999; Dornyei & Shoaib, 2005). According to Wahyungshi and Afandi (2020), there are significant issues when we use the English language in the classroom. Based on the findings of the selected 15 male students and the other 15 female students from the University College of Ratmalana, based on data obtained using a questionnaire with six open-ended questions, the findings indicated that common reasons for anxiety and change in the attitudes of students who are not good at their speaking ability are lack of knowledge and competence in grammar, criticism from co-learners, less time to practice, and the need for motivation (Ohsani, 2020). However, the findings of the investigations revealed a substantial lack of consideration of other variables, such as gender. As a result, it is now time to reassess research on students' attitudes towards speaking English based on gender. On the other hand, other studies claim that if students possess a positive attitude towards the use of English in delivering oral presentations, it is more probable that they will develop their speaking skills (Syafrizal et al., 2018; Toomnan & Intaraprasert, 2015). With this, it is now time to evaluate the urgent need to investigate other concerns that may impact the student's attitude toward speaking English, with an emphasis on gender.

In reference to the remarks mentioned above, there is a need to thoroughly investigate the underlying attitude of the students' English-speaking skills as well as the issues and concerns that affect the students' ability to positively perform in the classrooms, this time with a focus on the platform being used and the gender.

**Speaking English in virtual conferences**

Digitization is becoming increasingly common as the globe advances. There is a need for society to be fluent in English, as knowing it will be required to adapt to the changes brought about by the digitized world. As a result, the next generation must be fluent in the English language in order to participate in the twenty-first century transformation. They must be fluent in English because it is a must and is quite useful while talking (Paneerselvan & Mohamad, 2019). Meanwhile, Ahmadi (2018) claimed that, as technology's concept and implementation have progressed, it is now inextricably linked to both training and understanding English. Technology and the English language go hand in hand in the parlance of education.

Hence, due to the use of technology, students are able to contact one another despite the distance. It is one of the imagined repercussions of the widespread use of technology in education. Distance is no longer an impediment to communication (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). As a result, the wide range of online programs accessible on the internet allows anyone to engage in videoconferences. Virtual meetings are an essential component of teaching English as a second language (Ibrahim & Hashim, 2021). Therefore, in this situation, as mentioned by Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014), online conferences would allow students to connect with their peers, teachers, and non-English speakers, allowing them to widen their intercultural knowledge and raise their level of participation. Students who participate in videoconferences supervised by English-language professors will undoubtedly profit from them. Noticeably, this strategy will
assist students in correctly comprehending the language (Paneerselvan and Mohamad, 2019).

The use of technology in teaching spoken English benefits students since it allows them to gain information and increase their vocabulary, as well as keep up with current trends in the language, which are growing with technology (Hofer & Swan, 2006; Hibbing & Erickson, 2003). As a corollary, it is apparent from Burmark (2004) that when we combine the use of technology, it improves the students' skills and aids in their comprehension. In a related manner, relatively few studies have found that there were some improvements in learning the English language due to online learning (Paechter & Maier, 2020; Gorra & Bhati, 2016). Drawing from these studies (Hutabarat & Simanjutak, 2019; Wahyungshi & Afandi, 2020; & Spring et al., 2019), it has been demonstrated that the usage of technology and other online applications aids in the development of students' knowledge and skills in speaking English. Hence, the data above claims that it is now apparent that the usage of technology corresponds with the improvement of English-speaking abilities.

On the other hand, a number of academics have noted how Thai learners are unable to use their listening and speaking abilities (Jaiyai, Torwong, Usaha, Danvirattana, Luangthongkam & Piyadamrongchai, 2005) due to traditional teaching methodologies. Punthumasen (2007) concurred with the preceding findings, noting that, based on the responses of 167 students in his study; learners find it difficult to enhance their speaking abilities since the teaching style is ineffective. Thus, Prappal (2003) found a dilution that the use of technology helps learners not only communicate, but also improve their macro skills since it might be a replacement for an English language teacher. Thus, it is now time to reconsider examining the students' responses in light of the teacher's effectiveness in teaching English through the use of technology.

Furthermore, while the above-mentioned critical elements impacting English speaking in the classroom and attitudes are all important, studies focusing on the context of undergraduate Filipino students are insufficiently investigated. Therefore, this study will concentrate on the aforementioned environment while also identifying additional factors that may impact students' attitudes regarding speaking English on the digital platform.

**Shift to Virtual Classroom**

The COVID-19 virus plunged the world to a standstill in December 2019. These have had a tremendous influence on the education sector. Due to the health crisis, traditional face-to-face education was not possible. However, due to the widespread nature of the COVID-19 outbreak, students found it quite difficult to attend classes on a regular basis. If given the opportunity to attend physical classes, there were numerous healthcare protocols that had to be followed. With this, online teaching and learning became a requirement during the on-hold physical classes that each learner used to attend (Bird et al., 2020). However, notwithstanding the conventional face-to-face platform, the online learning environment curtails student communication with one another. Reaching out is also limited to postings or emailing. These may constrain students' ability to feel a sense of belongingness in the same way they do in physical classrooms where students are allowed to work with peers (Bawa, 2016; Ali, 2020; Martin, 2019).

Since it is a platform in education that conducts electronically aided learning, the term "virtual education" also answers to the name "e-learning." It is the virtual conduct of classes with no physical contact between students and teachers (Andrew et al., 2021). While Beek (2011) mentioned that when teachers use the internet and other technologies to reach out to students and supervise classes, this is referred to as "virtual learning." This means that there is no longer a need for a physical classroom and a traditional teaching and learning process.

Learn Cube (2017) indicated that virtual classrooms are platforms that use a digital environment for engaging and collaborative teaching and learning. It is a meeting place for students and teachers to interact and share their diverse ideas. Nevertheless, a large number of teachers were slow to adapt to the abrupt shift to online teaching. Some restrict themselves to using the Zoom app for video conferencing, and despite this, they were able to reach out to students and have
enriching classes (Bird et al., 2020). In relation to the abovementioned discussion, Poongodi and Periasami (2021) discovered in their studies that classes done online are considered student-centered, because it is imperative that students have the capacity to manage how they cope with the activities and adapt to the learning styles they are comfortable with. Moreover, with regards to students' active participation and learning practical experience, it was supported by the findings of Dolence and Norris (1995). Consequently, it is imperative to examine how the present shift impacts students' learning experiences, as well as how this correlates with changes in their attitude toward active engagement in the new platform provided as a result of the paradigm shift's demands.

The online classrooms, however, were all constructed in light of the many online platforms as stated by Alliyah et al. (2020). These findings were consistent with the following authors' claim, stating that the subsequent online platforms are the use of emails, sites for blogs, platforms for online debate, the use of videos, and all others. (Ko & Rossen, 2017; Ogbonna et al., 2019; Papachristos et al., 2010; Sturm & Quaynor, 2020; Tarman, 2020). However, studies by Chang et al. (2020) pointed out that the sudden change to online education because of the pandemic has affected the improvement and effectiveness of learners during classroom activities. According to the authors (Bower, 2019; Gonzales et al., 2020; & Wang et al., 2013), the teaching and learning processes associated with the requirement to utilize technology have an impact on the student's educational achievement.

As shown in the analysis by Mahmood (2020) in his research on Pakistani universities and their experience with online classes, there are approaches that need to be addressed for a good online class experience. This was coupled with the findings of Nambia (2020), concluding that for a successful online experience, there are considerations that include the following: the convenience of students with the platform they are using, their way of communicating, technological awareness, and the overall experience of both teachers and students. In contrast, it was established in this author's study in Bangladesh that, despite techniques and positive learning experiences, there are specific issues that impede the adoption of virtual classroom lessons (Ramji & Sultana, 2020). Thus, it is important to investigate the intrinsic learning experiences of students throughout the transition, with an emphasis on the Philippine context.

The efforts made to improve online education were motivated positively since it was also linked to the digital revolution (Chen & Mullen, 2020), yet there was a significant influence on the school system's negligence, with the learning process being the most affected (Onyema et al., 2020). Whereas, these key informants stated that not everyone can meet the expectations of online learning since low-income families are unable to support their children owing to the affordability of technology and other aspects that students must have (Delpit, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Giroux, 2004). It is therefore necessary to determine whether these concerns in the shift impact the students' attitudes in their speaking performances in virtual classrooms.

As a result of the sudden shift to online education, there were consequences for classroom improvement and effectiveness, as well as the influence of technology on student performance. With this in mind, it is also critical to investigate the implications of the concerns and issues surrounding the abrupt shift in the attitude of undergraduate level students toward their speaking abilities in virtual classrooms.

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative design to describe the respondents' profiles and attitudes towards speaking English in the virtual classroom. It is a method that is often utilized in quantitative research and employs statistical analytic procedures (Creswell, 2012). This is quantitative research because the variables used can be assessed using instruments with closed-
ended and predetermined questions, and the resulting numbers data can then be analyzed statistically (Creswell, 2009; Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

Furthermore, the current study employed survey questionnaires to collect data, which is essential given the projected time period, which is only a brief amount of time (Setia, 2016; Perez & Alieto, 2018).

**Respondents**

A total of 105 pre-service teachers enrolled in the academic year 2021–2022 at Western Mindanao State University were the respondents in the study. The majority of the participants were female (79, or 74.5%), and the age range of the participants was 17-32 years old, with a mean age of 20.43 (SD-1.61).

In terms of specialization, the majority of participants (58 or 54.7%) were from BSED, followed by BEED (27 or 25.5%), BECED with 11 or 10.4%, BSNED with 7 or 6.7%), and BCAED with 2 or 1.98%.

**Research Tools**

The current study's main goal is to determine Filipino undergraduate students' attitudes toward speaking English in the virtual classroom. The English-Speaking Attitude Questionnaire (ESAQ) of Bui and Intaraprasert (2013) was adapted in this study since it is related to the context of this research. The ESAQ was developed using the Language Learning Attitude Questionnaire (2004) and Okert's language learning questionnaire (2021). The items in the ESAQ focus on the respondents' attitudes regarding speaking English in the virtual classroom, their motivations for using the language, why it is essential to them, and their perceived English-speaking skills. Moreover, it was composed of 18 items and followed the 4-point Likert Scale (ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). Modifications were made and the statements were validated to fit the study's context. The insertion of the phrase "virtual classroom" into each sentence was the most significant alteration.

The questionnaire's general instructions were based on Dornyei's proposal (2013). According to Intaraprasert (2000), respondents must understand the context of the research in order to answer the questionnaire honestly. The instruction focuses on expressing gratitude, asserting confidentiality, informing participants that there are no right or incorrect responses, and emphasizing the significance of the study.

**Pilot Test and Reliability**

A pilot study with 52 undergraduate students was conducted to investigate the instrument's reliability (ESAQ). Furthermore, pilot studies were conducted to assess, on a small scale, the overview of the study strategy, and then, based on the outcomes of the pilot tests, revisions had to be made for the final data collection (Ackerman & Lohnes, 1981; Brink & Wood, 1983; Burns & Grove, 1987; Lieswiadomy, 1987; Polit & Hungler, 1987). On the other hand, it was mentioned that the minimum reasonable population for pilot testing is 30 representatives (Johanson & Brooks, 2009). Moreover, the majority of the respondents were female, with 90.20%. The age ranged from 18-23 years old; 8% were 18 years old, 33.3% were 19, and 33.3% were also 20 years old, then 18% were 21 years old, 6% were 22 years old, and lastly, 2% were 21 years old.

Due to the sheer pandemic and the restrictions associated with it, the survey was carried out via Google Forms. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete on average.

**Table 1. Internal Reliability of the Instrument**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
<td>.869</td>
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</table>
Table 3 shows the internal consistency of the domains in the ESAQ adapted from Bui and Intarapraset (2013). The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability test was performed to assess the data, and the result was (α=.869), indicating that it is acknowledged as reliable or acceptable in all 18 items addressed by the questionnaire.

**Coding Procedure**

The response of the respondents was coded in order to assess the data acquired from the administered instruments. In terms of demography, gender (1 for male, 2 for female), course (1 for BEED, 2 for BECED, 3 for BSNED, 4 for BSED, 5 for BCAED), year level (1 for first year, 2 for second year, 3 for third year, 4 for fourth year), and course (1 for BSNED, 2 for BSED, 3 for BCAED). Then, for the responses in the ESAQ (1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for agree, and 4 for strongly agree). Since no negative statements were identified, no reverse coding was performed in the instrument.

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The English-Speaking Attitude Questionnaire (ESAQ) was sent to students using Google Forms. The questions were examined and encoded on the aforementioned platform, which was then utilized for pilot testing. Since a physical gathering is not feasible owing to the health risks posed by the pandemic, the google form link containing the ESAQ was provided through messenger. As it is the best platform to utilize throughout the specified time period.

**Result and Discussion**

**Learner’s Attitude towards speaking English in the Virtual Classroom**

The ESAQ questionnaire responses were coded and evaluated. Descriptive statistics, as well as the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD), were employed (SD). Table 2 shows the results of the data analysis. The table contains the respondents' responses (frequency and corresponding percentages), the mean (M), and the interpretation (Interp.). 1.75 to 2.49 (Somewhat Negative [SN]), 2.5 to 3.24 (Somewhat Positive [SP]), and 3.25 to 4.0 (Negative Attitude [NA]) (Positive Attitude [PA]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Interp.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>22 (21.0%)</td>
<td>75 (71.4%)</td>
<td>7 (6.7%)</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>25 (23.8%)</td>
<td>71 (67.6%)</td>
<td>8 (7.6%)</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>18 (17.1%)</td>
<td>57 (54.3%)</td>
<td>30 (28.6%)</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (8.6%)</td>
<td>56 (53.3%)</td>
<td>40 (38.1%)</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 (1.0%)</td>
<td>6 (5.7%)</td>
<td>61 (58.1%)</td>
<td>37 (35.2%)</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9 (8.6%)</td>
<td>48 (45.7%)</td>
<td>36 (34.3%)</td>
<td>12 (11.4%)</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9 (8.6%)</td>
<td>48 (45.7%)</td>
<td>36 (34.3%)</td>
<td>12 (11.4%)</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>SP</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>You speak English in the Virtual Classroom because you want to communicate with foreigners.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Speaking English in the Virtual Classroom is important to you because you want to make friends with foreigners.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Speaking English in the Virtual Classroom is important to you because you might study overseas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Speaking English in the Virtual Classroom is important to you because you might need it later for your job.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>You speak English in the Virtual Classroom because all educated people can do that.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>You speak English in the Virtual Classroom because you have to do it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>You think you speak English well in the Virtual Classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>You think if you put much effort in practicing, you can speak English well in the Virtual Classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>In Virtual classroom, if you didn't know how to give an answer in English for sure, you'd still answer out loud in class anyway.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>You are not worried about making mistakes when you speak English in the Virtual Classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>SN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>You are not afraid of being laughed at when you make mistakes in speaking in the Virtual classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>SN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the analysis of the data in Table 2, the overall attitude of the respondents toward speaking English in the virtual classroom was "Somewhat Positive" (Mean: 2.91, SD: 0.37). In relation to the aforementioned analysis, it can be stated that, despite the paradigm shift in education caused by the pandemic, students' attitudes toward speaking English did not change (from traditional face-to-face classes to virtual classrooms), which concurs with Ashahrani (2016)'s finding that the use of virtual classrooms helps students improve their speaking skills.
and increase their confidence level.

Furthermore, as shown in the table, statements 11 and 15 (M-3.81, SD-.44; M-3.50, SD-.61) had the greatest mean. This implies that students see English as important for future endeavors and that learning the language makes them better speakers in the virtual classroom. This agrees with what Intaraprasert (2000) stated, that learners who speak English are most likely to have high motivation to look for opportunities in the future that are related to the English language.

Furthermore, findings 17 and 18, which had a "somewhat negative" (M-2.45, SD-.87; M-2.32, SD-.96) interpretation, state that students are afraid of making mistakes while using the English language and lack of confidence in using the language is attributable to their previous learning experiences, which were impacted by their instructor, learning environment, and not only conversational abilities (Wong, 2004; and Sawir, 2005).

There has been research undertaken on students' attitudes toward speaking English and their learning motivation to become proficient in the language. These studies were conducted to investigate students' attitudes towards speaking English. According to Liu (2007), the attitude and motivation of students to speak the language has something to do with their proficiency. On the other hand, Kitjanroonchai (2012) said that academic success and motivation to learn have a considerable positive relationship. Thus, this correlates to the findings in numbers 6 and 7 (M-2.49, SD-.81; M-3.23, SD-.67), which indicate that students speak English in the virtual classroom to make their instructor proud and to perform well on oral tests. With this, it is assumed those students' attitudes towards speaking English and their motivation to speak in class, whether in a virtual classroom or in a traditional face-to-face session, have a positive relationship.

According to Bui (2012), students who have a favorable attitude toward speaking English will have more opportunities to communicate orally than students who have a negative attitude toward speaking English. This suggests that opportunities to speak English influence how individuals evaluate their communication approach or that they regard opportunities as an incentive to improve their speaking skills. In this case, the findings under numbers 8 and 9 (M-2.68, SD-.85; M-2.52, SD-.83) indicate that students have a positive attitude and will utilize their English-speaking abilities to communicate with foreigners if given the opportunity. This also indicates that individuals consider it a motivation, not just a chance, to be proficient in the language of concern.

Based on the findings in numbers 1 and 2, students from Western Mindanao State University's College of Teacher Education have a positive attitude about speaking English in the virtual classroom and perceive the usage of the English language as fun and enjoyable to use when attending virtual classes (M-2.84, SD-.54; M-2.82, SD-.57). As a result, students enhance their speaking abilities not just in the classroom but also on other platforms. Indeed, Noom-ura (2013) said unequivocally that learning the English language is inadequate if it just takes place in classrooms, implying that learning to speak the language also applies to diverse modalities. English language learning is obviously insufficient if it takes place only in the classroom.

**On the extent of Attitude in Speaking English across gender**

The data was analyzed using the parametric statistical tool known as the t-test for independent samples to see if there is a statistical difference in the respondents' attitude toward speaking English in the virtual classroom across genders (male and female). Table 3 summarizes the findings.
Table 3. T-test result on the difference on attitude when grouped according to gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking English in the Virtual Classroom</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>Somehow Positive</td>
<td>.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>Somehow Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N- 105: 26 Males, 79 Females

Table 3 indicates that there is no significant difference between gender and attitude toward speaking English in the virtual classroom based on the data collected (sig. value = 0.189 > a = 0.05). Overall, it is clear that both genders (male and female) have a "somewhat positive" attitude. This contradicts the findings of Durer and Sayar (2012), who indicate that both male and female students have a negative attitude towards English lessons, although male students have a little less level than female students.

However, the research cited was conducted during regular face-to-face sessions, demonstrating a distinct modality and context. As a result, it is assumed that gender has no effect on students' attitudes towards speaking English in virtual classrooms.

**Difference on the extent of the Attitude towards Speaking English in Virtual Classroom across specialization**

The data set was treated through one-way ANOVA inferential statistics to see whether or not there is a significant difference in the attitude toward speaking English in the virtual classroom when the data is categorized according to specialization. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Attitude towards speaking English across specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Dependent</th>
<th>P-value (2 tailed)</th>
<th>Interp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking English Attitude</td>
<td>BEED-27, BECED-11, BSNED-7, BSED-58 and BCAED-2.</td>
<td></td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data analysis presented in Table 4 reveals a significant difference in the extent of the attitude toward speaking English in the virtual classroom when the data was analyzed per specialization. This demonstrates that specialization is a factor that determines the extent to which students speak English when classes are conducted virtually. Nonetheless, some research suggests that virtual classrooms are more comfortable and convenient than traditional face-to-face sessions. Students said they feel more confident speaking out and participating in conversations during class hours in virtual classrooms (AlQahtani, 2019; Banditvilai, 2016; Salbego & Tumolo, 2015).

**Conclusion**

Following a comprehensive investigation, the study reveals that Filipino undergraduate students have a somehow positive attitude toward speaking English in the virtual classroom. It is also highlighted in the results that, despite the paradigm shift in education caused by the pandemic, student’s value speaking English and their attitude have not changed. Furthermore, it was shown that there is no significant difference in views about speaking English based on gender. When the data was broken down by specialization, it was discovered that there is a significant difference in the amount to which people feel comfortable speaking English in virtual classrooms.

According to the study's findings, utilizing the English language in speaking during virtual class discussions was seen to be entertaining and engaging. This implies that the shift to different
modalities has positively changed students' attitudes toward speaking English. The usage of the English language during oral dialogues was also seen as a motivation to utilize the language in the future. It provides students with the chance to be driven to speak English despite the paradigm shift. It should be highlighted that the paradigm shift has not prevented students from using the English language in the virtual classroom, but rather has influenced their attitude in a positive way. Thus, with adequate acknowledgment of students' development and competent direction and monitoring of teachers, online education in the context of speaking English will be a success.

In relation to the aforementioned information above, one's attitude toward speaking English in a virtual classroom has been shown to be an element of language acquisition and motivation. It is not only possible in face-to-face classes, but it is also recommended in virtual classrooms. As a result, even with the shift in learning modalities, language teachers should give importance to speaking English during discussions or presentations.

Therefore, it should be highlighted that having a positive attitude can help with language acquisition and drive to speak the language successfully. This implies that motivation is critical in changing students' attitudes toward speaking English, whether in traditional face-to-face classes or virtual classrooms.

References


